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(*d*) if the answer be in the affirmative, the date, time and the persons by whom the telegrams or messages were first received, whether by clerks or officers themselves ;

(*e*) the date and time the officers first reached the place to investigate ; and

(*f*) what steps had been taken to prevent such an occurrence or protect the cheri people ?

A.—(*a*) *to* (*f*) Criminal cases arising out of the incident are still before the Court. The Government can make no pronouncement till these have been disposed of.

Mr. V. I. Muniswami Pillai :—" With reference to clause (*c*) of the question, will the hon. the Law Member be pleased to state if telegraphic or other message was received by the District Magistrate before the incident ? "

The hon. Diwan Bahadur M. Krishnan Nayar :—" The answer to all the clauses of the question is that the whole matter is now before Courts of Justice. As those cases are pending, I cannot go into detail in this Council."

Forests

Committee to enquire into the grievances of ryots in forest areas.

* 559 Q.—Mr. A. Kaleswara Rao : Will the hon. the Law Member be pleased to state what steps the Government have taken on the resolution passed in this Council on 6th September 1928 to appoint a committee of the Members of this Council to enquire into the grievances and hardships of the ryots in the forest areas of the province in regard to the administration of the Forest Department ?

A.—The matter is under consideration of Government.

Panchayat Courts

Alleged prohibition of legal practitioners from appearing before village courts.

* 560 Q.—Mr. C. Ramasomayajulu : Will the hon. the Law Member be pleased to state—

(*a*) whether complaints have been made to Government that section 24 of the Madras Village Courts Act prohibiting legal practitioners qualified or unqualified, from appearing or acting for clients in suits or proceedings before the village courts is causing great hardship and inconvenience to the litigant public ; and

(*b*) whether the Government would consider the desirability of amending the Act so as to make provision for practitioners capable of acting as agents to appear and act for clients ?

A.—(*a*) No.
(*b*) No.

Mr. C. Ramasomayajulu :—" May I know if the Government are aware that it is particularly necessary that persons should have some legal knowledge to attend to the work of the Panchayat Courts ? "

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The hon. Diwan Bahadur M. KRISHNAN NAYAR :—" The Government are not aware."

Mr. C. RAMASOMAYAJULU :—" Do the Government think that laymen can attend to Court business ?"

The hon. Diwan Bahadur M. KRISHNAN NAYAR :—" That is the sole object of the Act."

Mr. C. RAMASOMAYAJULU :—" Are the Government aware that difficulties are being experienced by litigants in this matter ?"

The hon. Diwan Bahadur M. KRISHNAN NAYAR :—" No difficulty whatever is experienced by them."

Mr. M. V. GANGADHARA SIVA :—" With reference to the answer to (b), may I know the reasons why the Government do not consider it desirable to amend the Act so as to make provision for capable practitioners to act as agents for clients ?"

The hon. Diwan Bahadur M. KRISHNAN NAYAR :—" There has been no complaint whatever that the Act is working any hardship on any person."

State Prisoners

Release of Mr. Narayana Menon.

* 561 Q.—Mr. G. HARISARVOTTAMA RAO : Will the hon. the Law Member be pleased to state—

(a) what was the surety demanded by the Government for the release of Mr. Narayana Menon ;

(b) how the surety tendered was inadequate ; and

(c) what were the conditions imposed by the Government for the said release ?

A.—(*a*) & (*c*) The Madras Government made no demands of Mr. Narayana Menon. The surety they contemplated was an undertaking given by Narayana Menon himself or by his friends on his behalf, that he would not take part in political activities or enter or reside in Malabar until the conditions there became normal.

(*b*) It was inadequate because it did not meet the requirements which the Government considered indispensable.

Mr. G. HARISARVOTTAMA RAO :—" May I know whether it is not a fact that a few friends of Mr. Narayana Menon have given an undertaking on his behalf as required by the Government ?"

The hon. Diwan Bahadur M. KRISHNAN NAYAR :—" Yes."

Mr. G. HARISARVOTTAMA RAO :—" May I know then why Mr. Narayana Menon was not released ?"

The hon. Diwan Bahadur M. KRISHNAN NAYAR :—" Because Mr. Narayana Menon did not give his consent to the conditions which were laid down by the two sureties."

Mr. G. HARISARVOTTAMA RAO :—" May I ask the hon. Member whether the surety demanded by the Government was one either from Mr. Narayana Menon or from his friends on his behalf ?"